

1 _____ BILL NO. _____

2 INTRODUCED BY _____
3 (Primary Sponsor)

4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT EXPANDING THE PURPOSES OF THE MONTANA DIGITAL
5 ACADEMY TO SUPPORT ARTICLE X, SECTION 1(2), OF THE MONTANA CONSTITUTION AND THE
6 PRESERVATION OF THE CULTURAL INTEGRITY OF AMERICAN INDIANS; AMENDING SECTION 20-7-
7 1201, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

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9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

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11 **Section 1.** Section 20-7-1201, MCA, is amended to read:

12 **"20-7-1201. Montana digital academy -- purposes -- governance.** (1) There is a Montana digital
13 academy at a unit of the Montana university system.

14 (2) The purposes of the Montana digital academy are to:

15 (a) make distance learning opportunities available to all school-age children through public school
16 districts in the state of Montana;

17 (b) offer high-quality instructors who are licensed and endorsed in Montana and courses that are in
18 compliance with all relevant education and distance learning rules, standards, and policies; ~~and~~

19 (c) emphasize the core subject matters required under the accreditation standards, offer advanced
20 courses for dual credit in collaboration with the Montana university system, and offer enrichment courses; and

21 (d) offer courses to support Article X, section 1(2), of the Montana constitution, including courses in
22 Indian language and culture that:

23 (i) utilize American Indian language and culture specialists as teachers;

24 (ii) support Indian language immersion programs pursuant to Title 20, chapter 7, part 14;

25 (iii) use materials developed by the tribes as part of the Montana Indian language preservation
26 program pursuant to 20-9-537; and

27 (iv) partner to the greatest extent possible with Montana tribal colleges to include dual credit and
28 intergenerational learning opportunities.

- 1 (3) The Montana digital academy must be governed by a board with equal representation from:
- 2 (a) the commissioner of higher education or a designee;
- 3 (b) the superintendent of public instruction or a designee;
- 4 (c) a Montana-licensed and Montana-endorsed classroom teacher appointed by the board of public
- 5 education;
- 6 (d) a Montana-licensed school district administrator appointed by the board of public education;
- 7 (e) a trustee of a Montana school district appointed by the board of public education;
- 8 (f) the dean of the school of education of the hosting unit of the Montana university system or a
- 9 designee as a nonvoting member; and
- 10 (g) the two officers provided for in subsection (5) as nonvoting members.

11 (4) The governing board shall elect a presiding officer and vice presiding officer to 2-year terms

12 without limitation on the number of terms.

13 (5) The governing board shall hire a program director and a curriculum director who shall serve as

14 chief executive officer and vice chief executive officer respectively on the governing board in a nonvoting

15 capacity. The program director shall develop and, upon approval of the governing board, implement and publish

16 policies and guidelines for the Montana digital academy pertaining to:

- 17 (a) course offerings;
- 18 (b) software and hardware selection;
- 19 (c) instructor selection;
- 20 (d) partnering school agreements;
- 21 (e) instructor training and curriculum development;
- 22 (f) course evaluation;
- 23 (g) grant opportunities; and
- 24 (h) other activities that are essential to the success of a statewide distance learning program."
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26 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Notification to tribal governments.** The secretary of state shall send a

27 copy of [this act] to each federally recognized tribal government in Montana.

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